

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SAM-01 SAB-01 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00

INRE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01 INR-05 L-02

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 ACDA-05

SCS-03 SCA-01 PER-01 FBO-02 A-01 SCCT-01 SY-04 AID-05

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FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1954

S E C R E T BEIRUT 15219

E.O. 11652: XGDS 5B (2)

TAGS: PINS, ASEC

SUBJECT: SITUATION REPORT BEIRUT

1. IN CONJUNCTION WITH RECENT UPSURGE IN CYCLE OF FEDAYEEN - ISRAELI HOSTILITIES ALONG LEBANON'S SOUTHERN BORDER, PAST TWO WEEKS HAVE WITNESSED NUMBER OF INCIDENTS ELSEWHERE IN COUNTRY WHICH COULD HAVE JEOPARDIZED AMERICAN LIVES AND PROPERTY HERE. THREAT LEVEL POSED BY SUCH INCIDENTS, WHETHER ACCIDENTAL OR DELIBERATE, APPEARS TO BE ON UPSWING, AND FURTHER SUCH ACTIVITY CAN BE EXPECTED.

2. IN ADDITION TO DEC. 12 ISRAELI AIR RAID ON BEIRUT (SEE OUR 14871 AND 14943), DEC. 10 ROCKET ATTACKS ON PLO OFFICES HERE (BEIRUT 14704), AND OTHER SHOOTING AND BOMBING INCIDENTS REPORTED OUR 15001, 14826 AND 14592 -- MOST OF WHICH OCCURRED IN CLOSE PROXIMITY TO RESIDENCES, OFFICES OR OTHER PLACES FREQUENTED BY AMERICANS LIVING IN BEIRUT -- OTHER INCIDENTS SINCE DEC. 3 HAVE BEEN AS FOLLOWS:

DEC. 3 -- RENEWAL OF FAIRLY HEAVY EXCHANGES OF FIRE IN OLD CITY OF TRIPOLI BETWEEN LOCAL BANDIT GANG AND
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LEBANESE SECURITY FORCES CAUSED US TO WARN OFFICIAL US

PERSONNEL AGAINST TRAVEL TO THAT CITY. ALTHOUGH FURTHER OUTBREAKS OF FIRING HAVE SINCE BEEN REPORTED THERE, EMBASSY NOW PERMITTING TRAVEL THROUGH BUT NOT TO TRIPOLI.

DEC. 9 -- FIREFIGHT BETWEEN SECURITY FORCES AND FEDAYEEN ELEMENTS IN AREA WEST OF BEIRUT DOCKYARD JUST OFF MAINROAD TO TRIPOLI. NO INJURIES REPORTED. TRAFFIC DETOURED AWAY FROM THIS AREA FOR APPROXIMATELY ONE HOUR.

DEC. 10 -- TELEPHONED REPORT OF BOMB IN EMBASSY RESTAURANT. NONE FOUND. TWO RESTRAINED STUDENT DEMONSTRATIONS.

DEC. 19 -- CONCERN EXPRESSED BY LEBANESE ARMY SECURITY UNIT COMMANDER TO EMBASSY SECURITY OFFICER OF POSSIBLE PLANNED ROCKET ATTACK ON EMBASSY BY FEDAYEEN USING VEHICLE WITH DIPLOMATIC TAGS AND DEVICE SIMILAR TO THAT USED AGAINST PLO OFFICES DEC. 10. WE NOW IMPLEMENTING STRICT PARKING RESTRICTIONS IN VICINITY OF EMBASSY. ALLEGED PFLP PLAN ALSO CONTAINS THREAT OF KIDNAPPING U.S. OFFICER OR DEPENDENT.

DEC. 19 -- THREAT OF ROCKET ATTACK ON EMBASSY CONTINUED, WITH COMMANDER OF ARMY ELEMENTS GUARDING CHANCERY HAVING PLACED ALL HIS TROOPS ON ALERT. HE ACTING POSSIBLY ON BASIS SAME INFORMATION AS EMBASSY. ELSEWHERE IN BEIRUT, UNEXPLODED TIME-BOMB (24 STICKS DYNAMITE) WAS DISCOVERED AND DISARMED AT FORD FOUNDATION OFFICES EARLY IN MORNING (DEC 19). ANOTHER SUCH BOMB, REPORTEDLY CONTAINING 8 KILOS DYNAMITE, WAS DISCOVERED AND DISARMED AT OFFICE BUILDING IN PORT AREA. BOTH BOMBS APPARENTLY HAD MALFUNCTIONED.

3. IN ADDITION TO PROHIBITING ALL PARKING IN FRONT OF EMBASSY, WE HAVE CONSULTED WITH GOL AND AMERICAN UNIVERSITY SECURITY FORCES. LATTER HAS INCREASED ITS PATROL WITH SPECIAL EMPHASIS ON AREA NEAR EMBASSY. WE HAVING MEETING WATCH COMMITTEE AND ADVISING AMERICAN STAFF EXERCISE PRUDENCE. WE HAVE PLACED TYRE AND SIDON OFF BOUNDS FOR TIME BEING.

4. SITUATION NOT UNDULY ALARMING BUT NO QUESTION THAT THREAT TO EMBASSY INSTALLATIONS AND PERSONNEL HAVE INCREASED.

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WE ARE REMAINING ALERT AND MAKING SURE WE HAVE TAKEN ALL REASONABLE PRECAUTIONS.

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